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17 FEB 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Foreign Language Development Program

This memorandum contains recommendations submitted for DCI approval. Such recommendations are contained in paragraph 5.

1. PROBLEM:

To develop a program which will meet current Agency requirements for competence in foreign languages and will build a reserve of Agency personnel competent in foreign languages for which there may be, at any future time, an Agency requirement.

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

a. The Central Intelligence Agency faces a constantly growing need for staff personnel proficient in one or more foreign languages.

b. The immeasurable scope of future responsibilities places upon the Agency an immediate need to provide, in advance, a reserve of staff personnel one or more of whom are proficient in any foreign language which may be related to future Agency responsibilities.

c. The Director has repeatedly and recently expressed his very great interest in expanding the language competence of Agency personnel and as a matter of principle his desire to provide "incentive pay" for development of language competence by individuals.

3. DISCUSSION:

a. Annex A discusses the several aspects of the problem, including

Section A: The language problem,
Section B: The incentive awards program,
Section C: Considerations relating to implementation of this paper and requiring special attention.

b. Annex B is a suggested Schedule of Awards to be used in the event that it is determined monetary awards will be made.

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4. CONCLUSIONS:

a. A comprehensive Foreign Language Development Program is essential to meet current and future Agency requirements for an adequate number of staff personnel proficient in foreign languages. The essential requirements of such a program are:

(1) The reiteration of the command responsibility of each Deputy Director to determine current and future language requirements for the full discharge of his responsibilities and to take all necessary and proper steps to assure the continuing attainment and maintenance of language proficiency by staff personnel under his jurisdiction.

(2) The provision of incentive, in the form of monetary awards to Career Staff personnel to attain and/or maintain defined standards of workable proficiency in one or more foreign languages.

(3) The provision of adequate facilities, both within and without the Agency, to permit qualified staff personnel to attain and maintain proficiency, regardless of the specific language requirements of their positions.

(4) The selection of a limited number of Career Staff personnel having exceptional qualifications for intensive training to develop proficiency in difficult, unusual, or short-supply languages for which a requirement may develop.

(5) The establishment of a register of the foreign language competence of all staff personnel having language competence, based upon uniform standard tests, in order readily to identify those individuals competent to meet a specific Agency language requirement.

(6) The expansion and strengthening of the existing foreign language proficiency testing program to meet the added requirements of both an incentive program and the establishment of a register.

b. The incentive awards program should contain the following policies:

(1) Awards should be granted only for effort resulting in achievement and/or maintenance of workable language proficiency, following effective date of the program.

(2) Only Career Staff personnel should be eligible for award.

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(3) Excluded from awards in the language(s) concerned should be native speakers and individuals whose grade and compensation are determined by their level and type of language proficiency.

(4) Only proficiency which is workable and useable should be awarded; that is, comprehensive proficiency at intermediate and high levels and specialized proficiency at high levels only, as determined by foreign language proficiency tests.

(5) Amount of awards should range from \$50 to \$800 depending on difficulty of language, and degree and type of proficiency, providing achievement awards only once and maintenance awards at intervals of twelve months, at 50% of the achievement rate.

(6) For purposes of incentive award and of building the Agency reserve, the opportunity should be offered to all qualified staff personnel to use the Agency's normal language training program, both internally and at external facilities to achieve proficiency; maintenance of proficiency, however, should be a personal responsibility at no expense to the Agency. Existing internal facilities may be used.

(7) To build a small reserve of highly proficient personnel in all languages of probable future significance to intelligence, a limited number of Career Staff personnel, with exceptional qualifications, should be selected for intensive training in designated languages.

(8) No distinction in awards should be made for proficiency based on command training as against voluntary individual effort.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended:

- a. That conclusions in paragraph 4 be approved.
- b. That advice concerning the legality for the payment of monetary awards be sought from the Comptroller General.
- c. That the Deputy Director (Support) be directed to implement the Foreign Language Development Program.

Attachment


Chairman, ad hoc Committee on
Foreign Language Development Program

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Concur:

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[REDACTED]

Acting Director of Training

Date 17 FEB 1956

Concur:

/s/ Lyman K. [REDACTED]

Acting Chairman, CIA Career Council

Date 17 FEB 1956

Concur:

151 R. K. White
Deputy Director (Support)

Date FEB 20 1956

The recommendations in paragraph 5 are approved:

151
Allen W. Dulles
Director of Central Intelligence

Date 6 Mar 1956

Distribution:

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